

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-3, 5-24 and 26-99 remain in this application.

The examiner has acknowledged that Claims 1-16, 18-21, 23-38, 40-43 and 45-99 are directed to allowable subject matter. Claims 17, 22, 39 and 44 are rejected.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, Second Paragraph

Claims 17, 22, 39 and 44 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as allegedly indefinite for reciting the term "wet ribbon". The examiner notes that the specification (page 14) mentions a dry ribbon but it is not clear if a ribbon that has a moisture content outside the range specified on page 14 constitutes a wet ribbon.

Applicants have amended Claims 17 and 39 to clarify the nature of the recited wet ribbon by further specifying a wet ribbon "having a moisture content of at least about 20%". Support for this amendment is provided in the specification, for instance, at page 16, lines 5-15. Since Claims 22 and 44 depend from Claims 17 and 39, respectively, the objections to all four claims are believed to be overcome by these amendments.

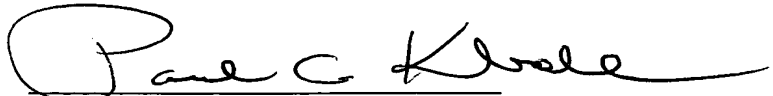
All outstanding objections and rejections having been overcome by the present amendment and response, applicants therefore believe that the present case is in condition for allowance and respectfully request early notice to that effect.

Appln. No. 10/051,201
Amdt. dated September 24, 2003
Reply to Office Action of July 29, 2003

If any issues remain to be addressed in this matter, which might be resolved by discussion, the examiner is respectfully requested to call applicants' undersigned counsel at the number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

WOMBLE CARLYLE SANDRIDGE & RICE

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Paul C. Kimball", written over a horizontal line.

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